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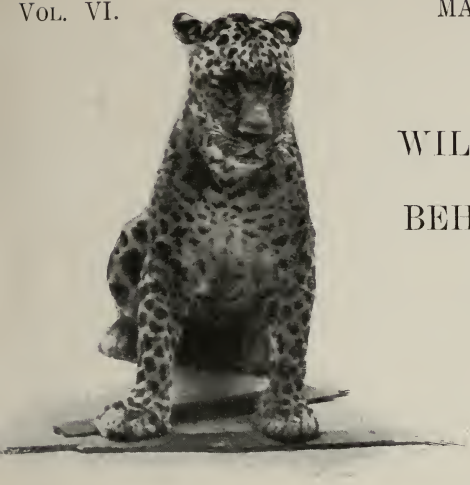
60, 487

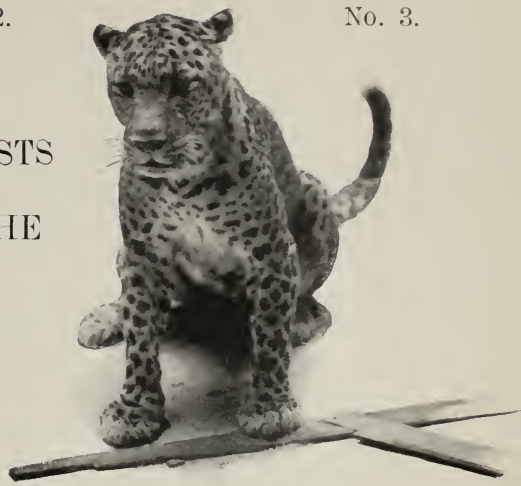
EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE

VOL. VI. MARCH, 1902. No. 3.

WILD BEASTS BEHIND THE BARS.



COGITATION.



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HOW CAPTIVITY AFFECTS THE LIFE OF THE JUNGLE.

BY C. BRYSON TAYLOR.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY OLIVER LIPPINCOTT.

This series of photographs of wild animals, perhaps the most remarkable ever taken, were made by Oliver Lippincott

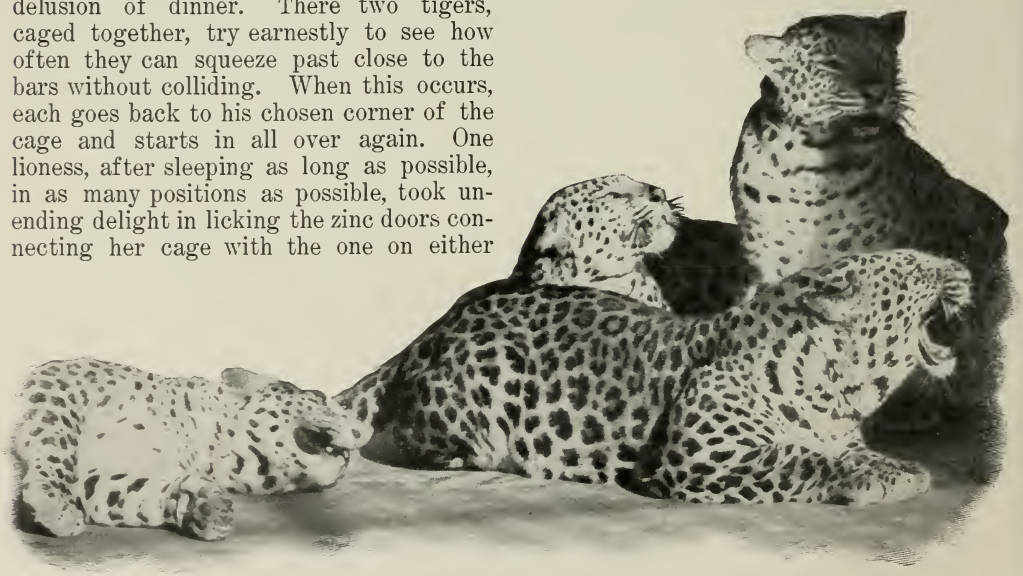
ONCE a keeper, by secrecy and much guile, saw a lioness teaching her cage-born cubs — two squealing, furry infants—the ancient lore of the jungle, which no beast ever forgets. How to leap from the brush upon a buck's back at the exact angle to break that back at a single blow—through a pile of straw. How to follow a blood trail to where the quarry lay—through sawdust. The prize was a bit of raw beef, but the cubs did not care. They had never known—never would know—the fierce joy of the hunt and the kill, the lust of clean, hot blood in the free desert. Not for them the knowledge of what it meant to send a challenge rolling across the desolate plain beneath the stars, to hear the answer pealing forth in distant thunder from the ends of the earth; to know themselves the masters of their world. Later on in life, the blood and the soul that was in them would teach them what they had missed and lost, as instinct teaches all wild things even unto the third and fourth generation of them that are born in bondage. They had not yet learned to pace to and fro, always to and fro, prisoners of the bars that held them back from life and the freedom which was their birthright. The keeper said it was a pretty sight; also he thought it was rather hard on the old girl. What good would all her pains ever do the little youngsters? Wherein he showed imagination—a thing which most of his kind greatly lack.

Much—very much—has been written of wild life behind the bars; of the lion, the leopard, the tiger, trained and untrained, in captivity; of how they are caught and caged; how treated, how trained, and the

sort of control obtained over them by their trainers. All that has been said has been from one point of view—that of the master, Man. We have shown how we feel concerning Leo and his ways ; but we have not stopped to think how Leo feels concerning us—self-constituted arbiters of his destiny—and our ways. His is the passive side : the side which may not judge ; must only suffer judgment. Yet he has his views of the case ; his own opinions of us, even as we have ours of him. And no one can study an animal as a personality—which is the only way he should be studied—without seeing this fact with a degree of clearness exactly proportionate to his understanding of and sympathy with the brute creation.

Go to a zoölogical garden in the dead of winter, when the animals are housed and no crowds are around to disturb, and watch. There you will learn to appreciate the full effect of captivity upon wild life. You will discover more facts of interest after an hour of silent watching than you would in half a year of encyclopædias. You will see the endless expedients invented to while away the monotony of the hours which must elapse before feeding time. Here a lion, learning his first lessons in the art of self-amusement, and not very expert at the business as yet, gets through several hours by chewing the tip of his tail into a soapy lather—cheating himself, perhaps, into a delusion of dinner. There two tigers, caged together, try earnestly to see how often they can squeeze past close to the bars without colliding. When this occurs, each goes back to his chosen corner of the cage and starts in all over again. One lioness, after sleeping as long as possible, in as many positions as possible, took unending delight in licking the zinc doors connecting her cage with the one on either hand, then scrubbing them furiously with both paws, sitting on her haunches like a dog before a door he desires opened. Another, a big black-maned beast, who had been a performer, gone bad, and been relegated to the lone cage, kept himself happy for hours by gravely marching upon three legs in complicated figures about his cage, wearing an intensely solemn expression of countenance. A lion rarely varies his pacings to and fro, as does a leopard, for example ; and when undisturbed almost never circles around his cage. Still less often will he do it after such fashion. This one may have been practising old tricks that had lingered in his memory from the days when he had a part to play in the world. A tigress, Trilby by name, found a long loose sliver in the floor of her abode, and amused herself hugely by shoving a claw under it and letting go suddenly, with a snap. Three times, when Trilby was not at home, was that sliver fastened down—splinters being dangerous to soft paddy paws—and three times did Trilby patiently dig it up again, determined not to be despoiled of her plaything, splinters or no splinters. While that sliver lasted, Trilby was a very happy tigress. The devices to keep busy are innumerable ; something they must find to do, and they all do it differently.

You will hear the conversations bandied



HOW ONE ANIMAL MAKES AN OBSERVATION—

back and forth; will note how one animal makes an observation and how the others take it up until every cranny of the building is echoing with hollow, full-throated roars which shake the very roof, and have the same effect upon the ear drums as the thunder of heavy guns. This is a thing they never do unless they fancy themselves to be alone. You will learn to distinguish between the voices of the animals. The reverberant rolling chest-notes of one, more like the bellow of an ocean liner's siren than anything else, given with head lowered to let the sound carry and all the force of the mighty lungs from which, as one keeper remarked, an opera singer could get many points worth studying. The deep grunting bark of another, which comes in as a finale to his particular solo and which is never uttered unless a certain tawny beauty has spoken first. The harsh mew of the tiger, like the mew of a very hoarse cat, several times magnified and with all the plaintiveness left out, which expresses a desire for sympathy and something to eat, but which sounds to a casual audience more like a menace and a warning.

But no matter to what pass a lion is brought in solitary confinement, with however little exercise, you will never see him act as does a bear in like condition. Watch one of these latter for half an hour; note the side-to-side rocking of the heavy body, moving only from the shoulders, the swing of the hanging head. You will first get to understand what it means, and then realize that it is no very pleasant sight. An elephant is the only other animal possessing this peculiarity of action; but then an elephant has another reason for it. For a lion is too proud to so display his feelings before the world. He is a stoic: what Fate sends he accepts as best he may, without cringing—until his limit is reached; until mutinous nerves are keyed too tight. Then he revolts against that Fate; and then his keepers say he has gone bad. But before his time—which perhaps does not arrive for many years—the lion plays his part of a noble captive well. One cannot beat one's head always against the bars; the process becomes wearisome. So he acquires philosophy. Yet under it, all his old instincts are ever with him; dormant it may be, lulled to sleep by the stagnation of his existence, but ready to wake to savage life on smallest provocation.

EXASPERATION.

All captive wild beasts may be divided into two classes: those who make the best of life as they find it and those who do not. Generally speaking, of the former class are most lions; of the latter, all tigers. A

—AND HOW THE OTHERS TAKE IT UP.

group of animals at the National Park in Washington form a magnificent illustration of this fact. One, the tiger, is a huge sulky, surly, scowling brute, splendidly handsome, with nearly perfect ebon markings on his tawny hide and evil yellow eyes. Upon a time this tiger went bad and became possessed of ten thousand devils. Since then nothing can be done with him. He has been given up as a bad job. His eyes meet your eyes squarely in a glance of level insolence, hold them a long instant, then change, glitter greenly, and shift aside. It makes you feel, indefinably, as though the brute had sized you up; had sifted out every vestige of your fear for him and held it up to scorn. For, looking at it in the highest sense, that which is higher in man a beast fears; and that which is beast in man fears beast. In this fact lies the germ of a vast psychological truth. His cold eyes laugh at you with a sneer; you forget

"THE LION PLAYS HIS PART OF A NOBLE CAPTIVE WELL."

that he is only a tiger, safe behind iron bars, and look through at the beautiful, evil spirit of him, full of fierce unrest and savage rebellion, treacherous, and glorying in his treachery.

Good examples of the philosophical class were two young Arabian lions, half grown; both dappled with the deeper yellow spots of cubdom, which always vanish sooner in the male than in the female. One had his mane just beginning to appear in soft raggy patches on shoulders and neck. He was as vain of this incipient wisp of glory as a youngster of his first downy apology for a mustache. He did all but stroke it. You were called upon incessantly, in insinuating ways, to admire it with him. It was an achievement to be proud of; his manner was as to say—"*I* did that, all by myself, but you couldn't do it if you tried." By virtue of this possession he tyrannized unashamedly over his companion. A fine pair they made, these two, with ropy muscles rolling under their tawny velvet skins, and clear inquisitive brown eyes. They took an interest in the world; they were ridiculously

"HE IS A STOIC, TOO PROUD TO DISPLAY HIS FEELINGS BEFORE THE WORLD."

SAMMY, A TWO-YEAR-OLD OF AMAZINGLY BUCOLIC HABITS, FROM WHOSE RUDE BEHAVIOR CÆSAR HAD GALLANTLY DEFENDED MRS. GRUNDY.

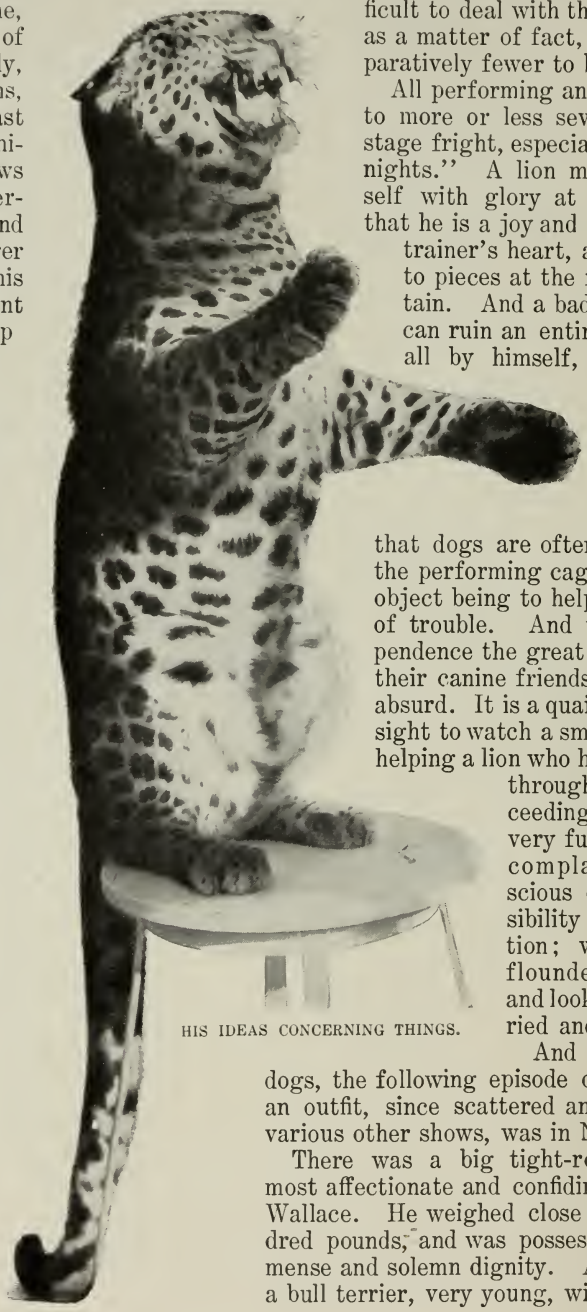
vain on being admired; they were warm and well fed and happy;—and they were young. And youth, in whatever guise, is greatly careless of the looming future. They sparred and romped with agile clumsiness—there is such a thing, and a lion has it—they were bubbling over with excited anticipation, because it was just their dinner time. That is the beginning of a youngster's prison education. It takes him a weary while to discover that that is all in life he has to took forward to. At first he is forever eagerly watching for an ever expected something to happen. It never does happen; and at last he understands that it never will happen. When this knowledge comes to him, he takes it according to his nature; but at bottom there is for long a hope, faint, but dying hard, that if he waits just a little while longer the heart-breaking monotony will end. It always does end, in one way—that unexplained change of temperament which is deeper than mere madness, which causes his fellows to shun him and man to fear him.

As is to be inferred, the feline actors whom we consider ourselves to know so well, have a much happier lot in life than falls to their less lucky brethren of the Gardens. They have fuller scope for their many small idiosyncrasies—also for their strength. The freedom from their cramped quarters, the additional exercise, the mingling with their kind; the excitement of the music, the lights, the crowds—all tend to brighten existence. They learn to look forward to the hour of their appearance with quite human interest. An animal is almost as susceptible to the temperament of a house as is a human actor. Applause stimulates him to do his best; the lack of it casts him down utterly. Some tricks he likes to do—no one can tell just why—others, every whit as easy, require much coaxing and persuasion on the trainer's part.

It must be remembered, when speaking of these animals thus from a higher standpoint than their every-day round of life, that few cast-iron tenets can be laid down

A MOST RESPECTABLE AND DEVOTED PAIR—CÆSAR, AFFABLE AND COURTEOUS ON *NEARLY* ALL OCCASIONS, WHILE HIS MATE, MRS. GRUNDY, WAS EXCEEDINGLY DEMURE AND PROPER.

to illustrate their conduct. This, because no animal that was ever born is like unto any other animal as to his mental make-up. Each one must be taken as a separate identity and considered as such. The trainer studies each one of his pupils with utmost care; gets to know his ideas concerning things and his manner of expressing the same, and moulds his plan of treatment accordingly, from what he learns, along the lines of least resistance. Each animal, of course, follows certain broad characteristics of his race and kind. Thus, if a tiger once consents to do his duty, he makes a brilliant performer, but he is ap to be longer in yielding to discipline than a lion or a leopard. Also, he is far less trustworthy than either of the latter; and when aroused is utterly fearless of any weapons the trainer can employ. He gives no warning of his intentions, and never forgets a grudge. A certain vein of obstinacy in his nature, an inexorable determination of purpose, makes him harder to handle; and once this vindictive stubbornness is awakened, it is all but impossible to overcome. And yet here again comes in the personal equation. A tiger, finding nothing to displease him, may comport himself altogether admirably, perhaps better than any of the lions with whom he works, taking an obvious pride in his occupation, and winning for himself golden opinions. But let something happen that he does not approve, and that same tiger will instantly revert to the first principles of his nature; and—often while apparently as tractable as ever—awaits a favorable moment for revenge. Many trainers will not admit that a tiger is more difficult to deal with than a lion; but, as a matter of fact, there are comparatively fewer to be seen.



HIS IDEAS CONCERNING THINGS.

All performing animals are liable to more or less severe attacks of stage fright, especially upon "first nights." A lion may cover himself with glory at rehearsals, so that he is a joy and a delight to his trainer's heart, and yet go all to pieces at the rise of the curtain. And a badly rattled lion can ruin an entire performance all by himself, and is not a pleasant customer to handle. It is for this reason, therefore, that dogs are often brought into the performing cages, their prime object being to help the lions out of trouble. And the abject dependence the great cats place on their canine friends is sometimes absurd. It is a quaint and curious sight to watch a small, stocky bull helping a lion who has lost his cue through his paces, exceedingly important, very full of business, complaisantly conscious of the responsibility of his position; while the lion flounders helplessly and looks frankly worried and full of care.

And speaking of dogs, the following episode occurred when an outfit, since scattered and merged into various other shows, was in New York.

There was a big tight-rope walker, a most affectionate and confiding lion, named Wallace. He weighed close on eight hundred pounds, and was possessed of an immense and solemn dignity. Also there was a bull terrier, very young, with a vast idea

of his own importance. This youngster took it upon himself to guard, cherish, and protect this same big Wallace; and Wallace conceived an especial fancy for the dog, and looked to him for help upon all possible occasions. And there was a lioness, Gyp by name, who was a haughty beauty with many airs, and after the manner of her kind, strongly disposed to have her own way. It was her mission in life to leap through a blazing hoop from a horse's back, a striking feat, and one wherein she showed surpassing grace, and an insolent indifference to the applause of her admirers. But once, shortly before the scene below took place, she was startled out of her high disdain and the onlookers had a treat—those who were not too frightened to realize it. She scorched her tail in going through the hoop, and for three minutes thereafter the cage was a concentrated whirlwind. After that she was sulky and morose, ignored all apologies, and suddenly, one night, refused point-blank to do the trick at all. She sat on her block and yawned impolitely in the faces of the spectators, and swore below her breath at the sting of the whip wherewith the trainer tried to mend her manners. The three other lions sat down to watch the affair. The dogs in the cage understood that something was wrong, though how to remedy matters was quite beyond them. So they stood around awaiting developments, able to demonstrate their willingness to hold up their share of the performance only by doing what they were told with extra diligence. The ambitious bull, in the zeal of his ardor, got himself in trouble first.

The trainer, finding that Gyp absolutely refused to budge, left her to get over her sulks and went after Wallace. It chanced that Wallace's turn came always after the wayward Gyp, and he was not prepared for any alteration. For performing animals, on the stage, are simply living automatons. They do such a thing after a comrade has done such another thing; the music, a stamp of the trainer's foot—small matters that to the unknowing seem accidental, or at most incidental — furnish them their cues. Their proficiency is the result of habit; of doing many times a certain thing at a certain time on a definite signal. So that when Gyp disturbed the established routine, like the one wheel out of gear which throws the whole machine into confusion, Wallace, with the best intentions in the world, got himself hopelessly tangled up. He hesitated, and glanced appealingly at the trainer. The spectators did not know what ailed him, but his distress was so obvious that they instantly sympathized. Some one started encouraging applause; others took it up. Wallace felt better, being assured that nobody was laughing at him. The trainer rubbed the whip butt comfort-

A LEOPARD SPARRING.

ingly along his back, talked to him a moment, and took him over to the rope. This was in reality a four-inch canvas band stretched taut six feet or so above the floor, with just enough give and sag to make the act appear thrilling, while actually safe enough for the animal if he minded his business.

Wallace put both paws on the lowest of the steps leading to the platform above his head, stopped, and looked unhappy. The trainer encouraged him and sent the bull in to help him out. This the youngster did, enthusiastically; and with much manœuvring got his charge up the steps and safely launched upon the rope. But Wallace was nervous, and showed it. That was none of the bull's business, however; he had carried out his orders, and felt correspondingly jubilant. So, just as Wallace got carefully to the middle of the rope, where the sag was greatest, the bull's feelings overcame him, and he spun around on his tail directly beneath the other, barking joyfully—a grave breach of discipline. Then things happened. It might have made the lion giddy; he might have forgotten for the instant where he was; a number of cogent reasons might be advanced. He stopped short, growling formidably, and looked down at the dog like a cat on a wall. The rope began to sway; Wallace tried to stop it, to advance, to retreat, and only made it swing the harder; suddenly slipped one foot off and fell. Before the house could gasp or the trainer could stir he had landed, on his feet, insulted, humiliated, swelling with outraged dignity and ire. His right paw caught the bull, artlessly prancing over to investigate, and sent him flying as though from a catapult to the other side of the cage, where he dropped with yells of fright and pain. Probably Wallace would have served any other object, animate or inanimate, in like manner; only the bull, for his sins, happened to come first. The other lions leaped to their feet as though galvanized; the trainer caught Wallace and forced him to a crouch; the dogs sprang to attention. Fortunately for all concerned, as in the majority of similar cases, no climax occurred, though people craned forward, stirring with the morbid instinct of curiosity which is inherent in the masses—a curiosity that stretches its neck to look and shrinks blanching when it has seen. The incident ended there—except for the two principals.

When the bull was whole once more, Wallace refused positively to speak to him, despite all his apologetic overtures. Wallace would run no more risks of being rendered ridiculous by any foolish dog who had no more sense than to play such low-down tricks upon a friend. Wallace's acquaintance was forfeit. Only just before his act did the injured one deign to notice his erstwhile chum's existence. Then he ran him into the farthest corner, warned him not to interfere in matters that no longer concerned him on pain of severe chastisement, and went loftily back to do his turn without assistance. The next time he wished

"THEY LEARN TO LOOK FORWARD TO THE HOUR OF THEIR APPEARANCE WITH QUITE HUMAN INTEREST."

to be prompted he sought out a Russian boar hound, and of his own accord elected him to the position of mentor. And the bull, outcast and forsaken, and with his feelings badly hurt, sat on the floor and howled every time he saw his place usurped in such wise, until he frightened the other lions nearly to death—anything not on the programme is likely to have that effect—so that, finally, he had to be removed from the cage and from his Jonathan for good and all. He never got over it; and Wallace, though still good-natured and docile, ceased to be quite so trusting as formerly.

One of the many queer features to be noted in the study of captive life is the fact that nearly all animals have one particular form of punishment which appeals to them more forcibly than any other. A certain celebrated lion seems to fear nothing in the world save a stick in the trainer's left hand. If in the right hand it is nothing but an ordinary stick, and not at all to be feared; but let the man shift it to his left, and it instantly becomes endowed, to that lion's mind, with limitless powers and possibilities. A frisky young tigress, whose performances are now over, in her palmy days was affected only by her trainer's blowing sharply on her nose. This apparently simple operation never failed to electrify her into an instant's rigid immovability, thus giving the man a chance for more heroic treatment. It appeared to be somewhat in line with the effect which the same performance has upon a rabbit. The trainer discovered this peculiarity quite by accident, and, on the first occasion, was nearly as much astonished at the result as the animal herself.

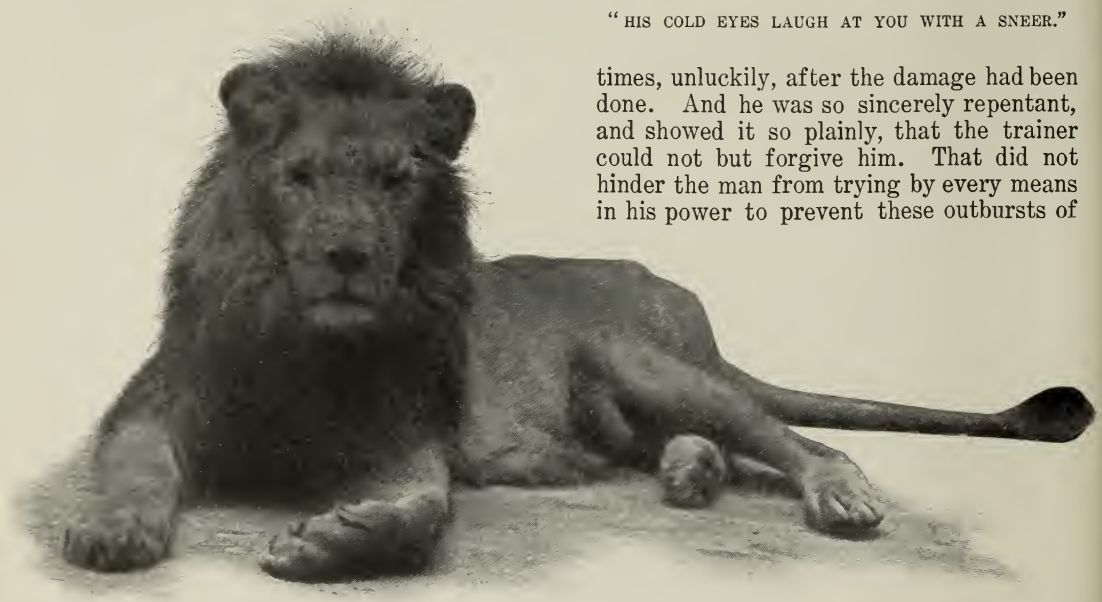
An instance of this trait took place in Berlin five or six years ago. By way of introduction it should be explained that almost the first thing an animal learns when he is performing with other animals is that his block or chair, or whatever it may be, is his own particular property, where he can retire when his act is over, and where he is sure of not being disturbed by the trainer or his fellows. A lion finds this out very quickly; and if he sees another in his place —even though by accident—will promptly dislodge him, no matter if the intruder be three times his size. Also, it is an unwritten law that an animal shall not interfere with another who is "on the floor," but shall take care to keep well out of his way. As soon as a lion gets to know anything at all of the business, he understands these rules perfectly, and rarely ever violates them.

Three lions were concerned in the following affair: Sammy, a two-year-old of amazingly bucolic habits, newly imported and just beginning his education, consequently very green; Cæsar, a splendid specimen of his race, affable and courteous upon

THE STAR PERFORMER.

nearly all occasions, with one bad exception; and Cæsar's mate, a shapely young lioness who suffered under the name of Mrs. Grundy, by reason of her exceeding demureness and propriety. Cæsar's block was between Mrs. Grundy's and Sammy's; and he usually turned his back on the latter in order to bestow his whole attention upon his lady-love. He was most devoted; when she was busy and he was not, his eyes were never off her. None of the other lions dared say a word to her when Cæsar was around. He was suspicious of even the trainer. Mrs. Grundy accepted his homage calmly, and ordered him right and left as best suited her whim and pleasure. She ate half his dinner as well as her own; and Cæsar only licked her soft back with his great red tongue and purred. She turned him out of the sunny corner of their cage and lay down in it herself; and Cæsar went off quietly and curled up somewhere else. He was a gentleman through and through; and if she wanted to ride over him rough shod, why, he let her do it. She could not hurt him in any way by it. All the same, to the rest of the world Cæsar was anything but lamblike. His disposition was marred by an abominably quick temper, though after the first flash he was always sorry for it, and begged pardon like a man—sometimes, unluckily, after the damage had been done. And he was so sincerely repentant, and showed it so plainly, that the trainer could not but forgive him. That did not hinder the man from trying by every means in his power to prevent these outbursts of

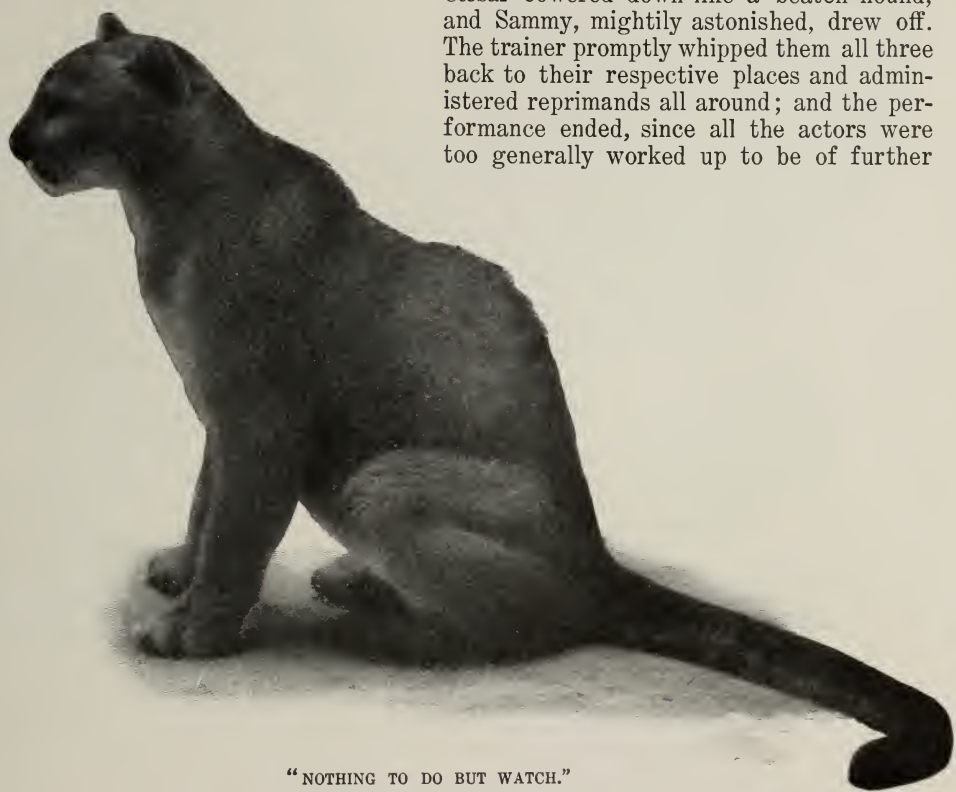
"HIS COLD EYES LAUGH AT YOU WITH A SNEER."



WALLACE, THE TRUSTING ONE.

rage, which flared up on slight irritation, and were preceded by a quivering of the animal's whole body; and which, apparently, nothing could control.

Upon the night of Sammy's *début* things went off all right until after the see-saw act. Sammy had not yet become fully accustomed to the rocking plank, though he stood that and the lights and the gaze of the crowds remarkably well. But he was glad when it was over, and jumped down in a hurry to get to his block. It has been said that Sammy was bucolic; he was also clumsy, and had no manners at all. And in addition, he was somewhat upset. It came to pass that Mrs. Grundy, who had also been on the see-saw, left it just as Sammy did, and, either through inadvertence or because she thought she could treat all creation as she treated her indulgent lord and master, leaped coolly up on Sammy's block and settled herself comfortably. She even started to wash her face. So when Sammy came along, he found his place taken. Now Sammy knew perfectly well that this was not right; and it must be confessed that he had the law on his side. Mrs. Grundy knew it quite as well, and cared not a flirt of her tail for it. Had she not Cæsar to take care of her? Sammy should have remembered that he was in the city where people acted—if they did not feel so—in a genteel manner and with due regard for appearances. But, being an ignorant lout, he did a most ungallant thing. He did not offer violence—no lion in his right mind ever bares tooth against a female of his race, unless to save his own life. But he went behind and pushed; and Mrs. Grundy slid off the block to the floor. Instantly Cæsar, who had watched the situation with rising wrath, leaped from his block straight for Sammy's throat. If he had found his grip, the show would then and there have been the loser by several hundred dollars' worth of valuable raw material. But if gallantry was not in Sammy's line, fighting was; and before the trainer could reach them they were at it nip and tuck. The bone of contention got back on the forbidden block and looked on placidly. Then a thing happened. In the scrimmage Sammy found Cæsar's ear in his mouth, and, naturally enough, bit it. Cæsar cowered down like a beaten hound, and Sammy, mightily astonished, drew off. The trainer promptly whipped them all three back to their respective places and administered reprimands all around; and the performance ended, since all the actors were too generally worked up to be of further



"NOTHING TO DO BUT WATCH."

A TROOP OF PERFORMING LEOPARDS.

use. But Sammy had unconsciously given his keen-eyed trainer an idea; and the next time the little premonitory tremor ran along Cæsar's knotted muscles, the man grabbed his ear. Again Cæsar slunk down into submission; and after that the solution of the problem was plain. It is safe to say that with not another lion in a hundred would such a mode of treatment have had the slightest effect.

All of which only goes to show of how little value are theories, in regard to this most risky of businesses—lion training—unless founded upon facts which may be gained only by experience. One is forever discovering something new; something that, had he not met with cases to the full as strange, he would have set down as incredible. Evidences of almost human intelligence, of what is near akin to reasoning power, of a putting together of cause and effect; instances of cold-blooded treachery, of gallant defence, of pronounced affection and equally pronounced hate; philosophical endurance, sullen submission, sav-

WAITING FOR THEIR CUES.

agely impotent rebellion against that which may not be opposed nor overcome—all this one may find, and more. Who may know the seething undercurrents flowing beneath the surface of the dreary monotony of outward existence; the fierce unrest, the inherited love and longing for the hot life of the jungle, which even small things born in captivity feel, though they may never know? For it is their nature; and Nature is ever true unto herself.

How can an unreasoning brute experience any such depth of feeling, being not gifted with the greater capacity for emotion o man?

Watch him, study him, be it never so lit tle; and he will answer that question for himself. Unmistakably.

GOING THROUGH HIS PACES.

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